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FOURTEENTH CELEBRATION
OF THE BIRTHDAY OF
SENATOR CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW

BY THE

Montauk Club of Brooklyn

April 22, 1905

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W. T. Price
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DEPEW'S 71ST BIRTHDAY;
MONTAUK CLUB BANQUET.

JUNIOR SENATOR AND WIFE; SENIOR SENATOR AND
WIFE; MR. WOODRUFF AND FIANCÉE THERE.

MOST OF MEMBERS' WIVES, TOO.

EVENT WAS AN OVATION TO THE BETTER HALVES OF CREA-
TION—WHAT WAS SAID IN SPEECHES.

Looking even younger than he did a year ago, when he said he was 70, Chauncey M. Depew sat down to a banquet last night at the Montauk Club. It was the fifteenth consecutive anniversary of his birthday that he had enjoyed in the same way—the guest of the club, but he gave definite evidence that he enjoyed this banquet more than any of the preceding ones, though he divided the honor with Mrs. Depew and United States Senator Thomas C. Platt and Mrs. Platt.

It was an interesting affair for many reasons, the principal one, perhaps, being that women were present for the first time in the many years that Senator Depew has been the guest of honor, and the wives, sweethearts and daughters of the members very generally improved the opportunity to be present. At the guest table sat former Lieutenant-Governor Timothy L. Woodruff, the toastmaster, and President of the club, and Controller Edward M. Grout and Mrs. Grout. At Mr. Woodruff's right and left sat Mr. and Mrs. Depew, and Senator Platt sat next to Mrs. Grout, while Mrs. Platt was vis-a-vis with Mr. Grout.

AN UNSUAL DISPLAY OF FLOWERS.

Another interesting feature of the banquet was the floral display, the clubhouse walls and ceiling being entirely covered and festooned with cut flowers, potted plants and vines. The clubrooms had disappeared for

the night and the banquet was what might be termed a two-story one, the tables being laid in the big assembly room and the big banquet hall on the third floor.

The guest table, however, was in the assembly room and the tables were all filled with their designated occupants when the Hungarian orchestra struck up "Hail to the Chief" and Senator Depew escorted Mrs. Platt to her place. There was great applause. Senator Platt followed with Mrs. Depew and everybody noticed that the senior senator from New York State was much more feeble than he was the last time he was in Brooklyn.

Miss Isabel Morrison, the fiancee of Mr. Woodruff, sat with a merry party at a nearby table, presided over by William Berri. Miss Morrison made a charming picture in her simple gown of white and was the cynosure of many feminine eyes, for she is to be married tomorrow—Easter Monday—to the man who presided at the banquet.

When the coffee was finished the banqueters on the third floor came down to the assembly room and the "feast of reason" followed the viands.

THE POEM BY MR. AVIS.

It was then that it became evident why the women folk were invited, the secret being revealed in the following poem by William A. Avis, the Montauk Club poet:

The committee for this dinner had to think up something
new,
They were seriously puzzled: didn't know just what to
do;
The old stag was a chestnut, so, of course, it wouldn't
do—
Who ever heard of chestnuts in connection with Depew?
That's why we brought the girls.

In the wigwam of the Montauks all the men are
changed to boys,

So all the ladies present must be girls to share the joys.
Once more we greet the Senator—a boy at seventy-one,
Just look at him and think of all the things and men he's
done.

That's why we brought the girls.

Would Dr. Osler chloroform at sixty? So they say!
Then let's be thankful that the doctor cannot have his
way.

No chloroform for me or mine; excuse me, I guess not.
There's lots of fun for boys and girls way past the sixty
spot.

That's why we brought the girls.

We always like to say nice things in after dinner
speeches,

Can we say our honored guest has always practiced
what he preaches?

Standing boldly for protection all his days in public life,
Has he lived up to protection? Didn't he import his
wife?

That's why we brought the girls.

Thrice happy we with Mrs. D.; the Senator must know
That when he brings his better half he's less than half
the show.

For as much as we like Chauncey, he's not in it with his
wife,

And we're glad she came to Brooklyn for a glimpse of
Indian life.

That's why we brought the girls.

We hope we may be able to create a good impression.
There isn't any doubt of Tim, for he's beyond expres-
sion.

Tonight the Montauk firmament takes in the lady star:
We hail it with the old cry of the Montauks—Wah
Whoo Wah!

That's why we brought the girls.

Now, if when you get home tonight you hang your
evening suit
On the faucet of the bath tub, you can blame imperial
brut,
And your wife will understand it without an explana-
tion,
For wasn't she right here herself? There'll be no ex-
clamation.
That's why we brought the girls.

Then in the dark brown morning, when the air feels
cold and chilly,
And the lady of the house looks like a drooping Easter
lily.
There will be a bond of sympathy, and you will be the
winner.
At breakfast you will both agree this was a dandy din-
ner.
That's why we brought the girls.

THE SPEECH OF MR. WOODRUFF.

After the applause over Mr. Avis' poem had ceased,
Mr. Woodruff said:

"Fellow members of the Montauk Club—We are hon-
ored tonight as never before in the long series of these
annual dinners, commemorative of the birth of our dis-
tinguished guest, Senator Depew, by having in attend-
ance those without whom an occasion of this character
lacks the grace and charm which can only be imparted
by the presence of the ladies.

"Tonight we welcome most cordially our lady friends
and thank them for consenting to grace this banquet by
their presence. We are particularly honored by the
gracious presence of Mrs. Depew, to whose continued
health, prosperity and happiness we would drink a toast
if the tables and glasses had not been removed, but, all

the same, we pledge the undying friendship of the Montauk Club.

"Never in the history of this club, by fellow members and ladies fair, our guests, or, for that matter, of any other social organization of similar character, has anything more extraordinary taken place than the fifteen consecutive birthday celebrations in which the members of this club have been privileged to participate and by which prestige immeasurable has been conferred upon the Montauk Club by our versatile, venerated and I must also say venerable guest—Chauncey M. Depew. I refer to him as venerable, not simply because 'seventy winters have besieged his brow,' but because Louis the Seventh of France, King George the Fourth of England and the immortal Shakespeare were all born on the 23d of April also, and of that incomparable quartet the only survivor is Depew. Shakespeare was not only born on the 23d of April, but 'shuffled this mortal coil' on the same day of the same month at the age of 52, younger than our illustrious guest will be tomorrow by nineteen years.

MONTAUK CLUB OWNS THE BIRTHDAY.

"I refer to him as venerated particularly by us, because he has given us the right to say that his birthday belongs, not to his family, nor to the people of the Empire State, nor to the people of the Union, but to the Montauk Club:

May heaven augment your blisses.
On every new birthday ye see.

"What is the secret of the great success Senator Depew has achieved in political, professional and financial fields? Work without worry! What is the keynote of his life? Optimism! That is why he is no older in spirit or appearance to-night than when he was our guest for the first time, fifteen years ago. When Alexander the Great

of Macedonia, before his great Asiatic campaign, divided his revenues among his friends, he was asked, 'Sire, what do you keep for yourself?' His answer was 'Optimism.' This was what enabled the youngest general of the ages to vanquish all the nations of the earth and then sigh for more worlds to conquer. At twice the age of this optimist, who conquered the world and died at 33, Senator Depew at 66 didn't take chloroform and under its destructive influence go to the happy hunting grounds of the Montauk tribe beyond the stars, but he took a wife (so did Senator Platt), under whose invigorating influences he has stayed with us upon the earth and will remain for years and years to come, unslumbered, celebrating in this wigwam of ours the birthdays which are the milestones of life's journey, but in his case seem to mark no diminution of that superb physical and mental being which God gave him. The optimism of Alexander the Great and the optimism of Depew the Great have proved the most potent powers in the achievement of conquests in both the ancient and the modern world, and Senator Depew has, on more than one occasion, given evidence of his optimism and refuted the charge of the cynic that an optimist is one who is married and says he is glad of it. In Senator Depew we have the personification of the old adage, 'Be old when you are young, that you may be young when you are old.'

The keen, bright shafts which thou dost fling
 At folly still are keen and bright;
 To thy renown the centuries bring
 No shadows of a coming night.

ADDRESS OF SENATOR DEPEW.

There was long continued applause as Senator Depew's smiling face was seen rising above the sea of faces and it was some minutes before he could proceed. He said in part:

"Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—It is difficult for me to realize that this is the fourteenth of these annual dinners which have been given to celebrate my birthday. More valuable than any material gain or political promotion is the compliment of several hundred gentlemen remembering for so many years the anniversary which made possible for me the joy of living. I wish I could share with you all its pleasures relieved of all its pains. For the first time the occasion is graced and honored by the presence of ladies. Surely this gallant innovation is the suggestion of our genial and popular President, Lieutenant Governor Woodruff, and inspired by the happy event which is to occur within a few hours, where we unanimously wish for his bride and himself long life, health and happiness.

"The rapidity of everything in our American existence is the marked peculiarity of our national character. There has enough been crowded into these fourteen years to make a hundred for any other nation. The most striking suggestion which comes at an hour like this is the quick creation and fading away of reputations. As dear old Rip Van Winkle said, 'How soon we are forgot!' The first of these banquets was in the last year of the administration of President Harrison. We were entering upon a campaign, with the nominations in June and July, which for the first time since the Civil War was to transfer the government of the country from the Republican to the Democratic party. William McKinley was scarcely thought of as a candidate for the convention and little known among the masses of the American people. Mark A. Hanna had no reputation whatever outside of the State of Ohio, and Theodore Roosevelt was a Civil Service Commissioner in Washington. Today McKinley holds a place among the immortals as one of the best loved of American Presidents, Hanna emerged from obscurity to make McKinley President and to become the Warwick of American politics,

while Theodore Roosevelt has a dominating position which has not been held by any President in our generation and a unique and original personality which commands for him more than any other ruler the attention of the world.

"But when I think over the full round of fifty years of my activities in law, business and politics the saddest reminiscences are those of the reputations which fade away. Of the Revolutionary period, partisan politics give contemporaneous interest to Jefferson and Hamilton because of their antagonistic schools, but as Washington rises, they drop down. In the middle period a certain fascination about the triumvirate of Webster, Clay and Calhoun keeps their memories green, but the schoolboy and the college man of to-day know little of them. I have lived for six years in Washington at the house occupied by Daniel Webster while he was Secretary of State and in the Senate. An English visitor to whom I mentioned this, said, 'Very interesting—the man who wrote that beastly dictionary whose spelling spoiled the language!' I heard a story, but do not vouch for its accuracy, of a statesman in England, who said, 'We have nothing to compare with your Webster, who, as I learn, was your greatest statesman and orator, wrote a dictionary and was hung for killing a client.' Any schoolboy after the Civil War could have called off easily the names of three-score heroes on the one side and the other, but now, so far as the universal public is interested, they know only Lincoln, Grant and Lee. The obvious lesson is: Do not be a fool and work for posterity. Do your best in your day and generation and receive their rewards. If posterity remembers you, it is not your fault, and you have received your dividends before you died.

"Six years ago this occasion was made a celebration of my election to the Senate; tonight of my re-election. Between the former and the latter it seems but the rising and the setting of the sun of a single day. It has

been a joyous period, but passed like a dream. The war with Spain created for us new problems to solve and put to the supreme test our ability to assume great responsibilities and perform high duties without material rewards. The splendid vindication of promise and performance in Cuba, the burden carried so successfully in Porto Rico and in the Philippines form a new and brilliant chapter in American history. From our first Presidency in 1789 to McKinley in 1899 the world had cared little for our internal politics and nothing about our foreign policy. But in these six short years the most interesting subject in every mart and center of manufacture and trade has come to be 'The American invasion,' and the most acute question in every Cabinet, 'What will be the attitude of the United States in the ultimate settlement and disposition of countries, treaty ports and markets in the far East?'

THE SENATE AS VIEWED BY A MEMBER.

"I have studied the Senate during my membership, and with each year my respect and reverence for it have increased. As we grow in population and territories, as our relations with foreign powers become more important, as our world trade adds to the cares of government, as the Monroe Doctrine presents new phases and new possibilities, as the concentration of industries more and more absorbs the public mind and attention and as, growing out of these, is a constant peril of a furore of passion sweeping the country off its feet, the conservatism of the Senate becomes more and more the sheet anchor of our peace and safety. That there are no limitations to debate and no previous question is the frequent criticism of this body. It is exasperating to a degree that the majority cannot have its way the moment it feels the strength of its numbers, but I cannot recall a single good measure which has been lost by this obstruction of the minority, but I do remember many cases

where the power of the minority has given the country time to think and brought the majority to reason and sanity. The more powerful the nation and the more complicated its interests at home and abroad, the greater is the danger of haste. It is irritating, but nevertheless consoling, to find salvation in a flood of talk.

When I was elected the question of the election of the United States Senators by the people was arousing universal interest. It has in a measure died out. The people do not care about the abstract proposition that as the Senators are the Ambassadors of sovereign states they should therefore be elected by the Legislatures of those States, but they are deeply concerned in having a voice in their selection. At my period in life and under the circumstances of my election I can, I hope, without a charge of egotism say a few plain words. The popular appreciation of an election by the people is a nomination by the State Conventions of the two parties. The people then are helpless except to vote for the nominees of the conventions. Those nominees may be, as Conventions go, the incidents of the trading of localities for different places on the ticket and not the popular choice. I have three times seen a candidate for Governor, who was sure of a nomination three hours before the convention met because he was the choice of the people, lost in the shuffle, he did not know how, between that time and the calling of the roll, when his name was not mentioned. The delegates to a State Convention are elected in many cases by caucuses controlled by a few individuals or delegates. They have no oath of office, and their action can never be called in question by a constituency. "The Legislators, on the other hand, have sworn duties to perform and ambitions for the future. They are judged by their acts. In the interval between the 6th of November and the 1st of January, in my case, the newspapers and the people had two full months to discuss whether the present incumbent should be retired

from the Senate or returned. If the matter had been submitted to the state convention the probabilities would have been against my receiving the nomination. If there had not been a popular approval of my course and a desire for my continuance in the Senate it could not have been manufactured. But with two months for the press to speak out, for the people to discuss the question and for them to organize in school districts, towns and cities, the popular will became evident and found its expression in the vote of the Legislature. It is possible to conceive of a case where the Legislature might even disregard that. The primary is the only practical suggestion of an election of United States Senators by the people. It is expensive and cumbersome, but it has been successfully tried in several states and proved entirely satisfactory. I am very happy in the thought that in the final analysis the issue in my election instead of being a contest with a friend was simply whether or not I should be continued for another term.

"I have searched for years for some book in which had been collated the oracles of Delphi and their effect upon the history of the ancient world, but have been unable to find it. It is known that the utterances of the god controlled the politics and foreign policies of the classic age for centuries. A most interesting volume would be the effect of little, apparently trifling things upon the fortunes of individuals, parties and peoples. A single remark of Benedetti, the French Ambassador to Prussia, made to King William at the watering place at Ems, brought on the Prussian-French War, created modern Germany, despoiled France of Alsace and Lorraine and influenced the politics of the world. In a bill rendered by William L. Marcy, as judge, to the State Comptroller, when the law required an itemized account of expenditures, a charge of 50 cents for patching his pants impaired the future fortunes of that statesman and of his party. General Winfield Scott, the Whig

candidate for President, had won the admiration of the country by his gallantry as a soldier, and his canvass was exceedingly promising until in giving an excuse for the delay in answering the communication of an important committee he claimed it was due to absorption in a 'hasty plate of soup.' That 'hasty plate of soup' laughed him out of the canvass. No man ever came so near the Presidency and lost it as James G. Blaine. Had he carried the State of New York he would have been triumphantly elected, but the State went against him by only 1,037 majority. The famous alliteration of the three R's: Rum, Romanism and Rebellion, in the speech a few days before election, addressed to Mr. Blaine on behalf of the Protestant ministers by the Rev. Dr. Burchard, alienated tens of thousands of voters and not only ended the ambition of a lifetime, but changed the course of American politics. A single remark made at the Executive Mansion in Albany when Conkling, Arthur and Cornell were in conference led to the creation of the organization which defeated the third term and nominated Garfield for President.

A DINNER INCIDENT THAT CAUSED A REFORM.

"At the first of these dinners I took occasion in my speech, more in the spirit of an after dinner talk than serious accusation, to point out as sources of Brooklyn's pride instances of her acquiescence by her votes in notorious corruption. The Mayor, himself an honest man, took umbrage and left the table, and the pleasure of the feast was marred. Ordinarily such an event would have been forgotten with the day, but the pulpit of Brooklyn, which always speaks out, raised the question. 'Why did the Mayor leave the table?' He should have defended, said the ministers, the good reputation of his city by re-

futing these grave charges and not run away. ‘Why did the Mayor leave the table?’ thus heralded through the churches, was one of the causes of the reform uprising which swept this city and subsequently New York and then went all over the country. The conditions were ripe for revolt; the fuse was close to the powder magazine, and ‘Why did the Mayor leave the table?’ was the match.

“The great difference between the United States and other countries is in the comparative ease with which our problems are solved. This is due to the universal education and general intelligence of our people and to the confidence reposed in the government of the day because previous solutions have almost invariably turned out right. No matter how grave the question, it arouses interest, but not apprehension. The occasion may be fruitful in scare head lines, but there is general calm. Each year has furnished its doubts, and before we have again met they have been dispelled. Present problems are more interesting to us because we are nearer to them and they are new. The Presidency under Roosevelt has assumed closer relations to the people. He has been called upon to use the prestige of his great office in critical crises where under the law and Constitution he has no power. The force of this advice will always depend upon the reputation of the President of the hour. There must be unquestioning confidence in his ability, wisdom, patriotism, courage and absolute unselfishness. The settlement of the coal strike was a conspicuous example of this reserve power in the office and the man. The same is true of his action upon trusts and railway legislation. From an agitator clothed with the power of the Presidency such policies as Roosevelt advocates would create dangerous disturbance, with far reaching and disastrous consequences. But suggestions from Roosevelt, with the unique position he holds, backed by the trust reposed in him as shown by the enormous majority which he has received, strengthen public confidence and enhance values. It is a phase of the Presi-

dency that its duties, responsibilities and power are more interesting than any other development in our official history.

MONROE DOCTRINE A VITAL FORCE FOR A GENERATION.

"The Monroe Doctrine has been a vital force for a generation, but its real scope, meaning and responsibility have been largely academic. The request of the San Dominican government for us to intervene has compelled us to face the Monroe Doctrine under aspects never before presented. We cannot say to these Republics, 'You shall not trade with the people of foreign nations nor permit their citizens to engage with their capital in business within your borders,' nor can we say to foreign nations, 'We will not permit, without a war, your exercise of the rights granted to you by international law, and about which there is no dispute, in the protection of your citizens and the collection of your debts.' Some of these Republics have felt safe in inviting the citizens and capital of other countries and then at the whim of a revolution repudiating all obligations. They have done this under the belief that the power of the United States behind the Monroe Doctrine would save them from the consequences of such acts. The question is now upon us, presented in its best form by the request of San Domingo to take possession of her customs and adjust her debt or else to permit foreign governments to take her ports and do that work themselves. The latter course would defeat the vital principles of the Monroe Doctrine and leave foreign powers in practical possession of an island, with ports and harbors for rendezvous, on the line of our Isthmian Canal and commanding our island possessions and gulf coast. Our duty is difficult, but the duties and responsibilities of government to a great and free people are always difficult and they are dangerous unless courageously and wisely met.

THE STRENUOUS VS. THE SIMPLE LIFE—
HARD WORK AN INSPIRATION TO
ACHIEVEMENT.

"We have the strenuous and the simple life before us. The first has its attractions. I bought the second in the five cent edition and confess it is hard to read. When one has passed three score and ten the natural life has the same charm which appeals to youth. It is folly to strain or simper. Retire at sixty, cries one. Quit when you have enough to live on, says another. The Judiciary in our state and the Army and Navy have an age limit. It prevents some exhausted or played out officers from injuring the service, but deprives the public of many of its ablest and best equipped men. Dr. Osler's chloroform should be not for age, but incompetence. I have known those whose fires were burned out at forty and those who did not fully mature until sixty, and the succeeding twenty-five were their best years. Napoleon had lost his grip at thirty-six and Byron his genius earlier. Nothing equals the sustaining power of work or the life giving inspiration of achievement. Inanition and death are the sequels of idleness at any age. Prestige, whether from things done or inheritance, counts for much. Officers of distinction in business and financiers of vast wealth and experience defer to the judgment of a tried veteran and, curiously enough, pay a measure of the same respect to the green and undeveloped youth who is heir to the situation. The septuagenarian who drops the sustaining force of power and the incense of deference advances rapidly through Shakespeare's seventh age to the grave. If he visits the office or counting room the clerks no longer see him, and the manager or partner, who was so cordial in the active days, says: 'Excuse me, old man; so busy, you know. Come around Sunday to dinner if you have nothing better on hand.' He finds no place in the talk at the table. It is of the shop, with which he has lost touch and information. Dinner conversations once

made memorable evenings, and every period in life merry and wise, or filled delightful volumes, but now bonds and stocks of steel or copper or rails or mines confine it within the exchanges. Once we had quick recognition, racy reviews and keen enjoyment of authors, new books, art and adventure at home and abroad, politics, the opera or the drama. I spoke of them the other evening to a charming woman, who said: ‘Oh, those things are old fashioned and a bore! Tell me about ‘Smelters.’ Are they going up?’ After dinner the men discussed on which side to speculate in view of Union Pacific’s \$100,000,000 stock issue and its possible purchases.

“With diplomats and statesmen intent upon the discussion and outcome of grave international relations, and men of letters drawn to the Capital by its unequaled facilities and opportunities, Washington is almost the only place in the United States where mind can separate from matter and enjoy the lights and shadows of the higher life. The actors on the national stage know little and care less about the fluctuations of the stock market in New York or the hysterics of the pit in Chicago. They live and move in the bracing atmosphere of home and foreign policies and politics. A large majority of the leaders of thought, debate and action have passed the Osler chloroform period. Speaker Cannon in his seventieth year holds and guides the wild horses of the House with unequaled skill and firmness. It was an inspiration to hear Senator Hoar at seventy-seven brilliantly encountering the ablest orators of the Senate, and Senator Platt of Connecticut, whose death yesterday was an irreparable loss to the country, at the same age during the last session wielding commanding influence among his colleagues, while Senator Morgan at eighty held the floor for hours against the assaults of a host of adversaries with unimpaired vigor of mind and body. Senator Allison at seventy-six is head of the Committee on Appropriations. With his knowledge and grasp of the financial

conditions of the country he is the advisor of other statesmen and with rarest wisdom and tact he adjusts expenditures to income in the appropriation bills. One of the greatest lawyers and genial wits of our country, Senator Evarts, when near the close of his long career remarked at his Christmas dinner, 'When we began you saw a turkey stuffed with sage; now behold a sage stuffed with turkey!' Which meant that, though many years past the allotted time, he enjoyed life with the zest of the youngest.

"Death is an accident. It may happen to the child or the centenarian. Work, temperance and fun are the sources of longevity. Our thoughts should not be of the grave, for we are a long time dead, but of the uplifting duties and pleasures of this glorious old world. A philosopher once said—I cannot quote him literally: 'We begin life naked and bare. It is full of trouble and care. We go God only knows where. If we are all right here, we will be all right there.' I am not a philosopher, but as the outcome and experience of an unusually busy life let us offer an amendment to his philosophy:

We begin life naked and bare;
It has troubles, but more happiness rare.
If we do our best, God will take care
Both here and there.

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